

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-17, 19, and 20 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 18 are canceled by the present response without prejudice. Claims 1 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. patent 5,754,557 to Andrewartha in view of U.S. patent 6,151,682 to van der Wal et al. (herein "van der Wal"). Claims 18-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Andrewartha in view of van der Wal and U.S. patent 6,661,422 to Valmiki et al. (herein "Valmiki"). Claims 2-17 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were noted as allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims.

Initially, applicant gratefully acknowledges the early indication of the allowable subject matter in claims 2-17.

The present response is submitted to place the present application in condition for allowance based on the indication of allowable subject matter in the outstanding Office Action. More specifically, by the present response claim 1 is canceled without prejudice and claims 2 is rewritten in independent form. That subject matter was indicated as allowable in the outstanding Office Action. Thus, independent claim 2, and claims 3-16 dependent therefrom, are all believed to be allowable.

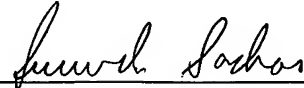
Rejected claim 18 is also canceled by the present response and claims 19 and 20 are amended by the present response to also include similar subject matter such as in original dependent claim 2. As noted above that subject matter was noted as allowable. Thus, amended independent claims 19 and 20 are also believed to recite allowable subject matter.

In view of the presently submitted amendments, each of the claims is believed to recite allowable subject matter.

As no other issues are pending in this application, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and it is hereby respectfully requested that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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